

815.9 Indigency determined — penalty.

1. For purposes of this chapter, chapters 13B, 229A, 232, 665, 812, 814, and 822, and section 811.1A, and the rules of criminal procedure, a person is indigent if the person is entitled to an attorney appointed by the court as follows:

a. A person is entitled to an attorney appointed by the court to represent the person if the person has an income level at or below one hundred twenty-five percent of the United States poverty level as defined by the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the United States department of health and human services, unless the court determines that the person is able to pay for the cost of an attorney to represent the person on the pending case. In making the determination of a person's ability to pay for the cost of an attorney, the court shall consider not only the person's income, but also the availability of any assets subject to execution, including but not limited to cash, stocks, bonds, and any other property which may be applied to the satisfaction of judgments, and the seriousness of the charge or nature of the case.

b. A person with an income level greater than one hundred twenty-five percent, but at or below two hundred percent, of the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the United States department of health and human services shall not be entitled to an attorney appointed by the court, unless the court makes a written finding that not appointing counsel on the pending case would cause the person substantial hardship. In determining whether substantial hardship would result, the court shall consider not only the person's income, but also the availability of any assets subject to execution, including but not limited to cash, stocks, bonds, and any other property which may be applied to the satisfaction of judgments, and the seriousness of the charge or nature of the case.

c. A person with an income level greater than two hundred percent of the most recently revised poverty income guidelines published by the United States department of health and human services shall not be entitled to an attorney appointed by the court, unless the person is charged with a felony and the court makes a written finding that not appointing counsel would cause the person substantial hardship. In determining whether substantial hardship would result, the court shall consider not only the person's income, but also the availability of any assets subject to execution, including but not limited to cash, stocks, bonds, and any other property which may be applied to the satisfaction of judgments, and the seriousness of the charge or nature of the case.

2. A determination of whether a person is entitled to an appointed attorney shall be made on the basis of an affidavit of financial status submitted at the time of the person's initial appearance or at such later time as a request for court appointment of counsel is made. The state public defender shall adopt rules prescribing the form and content of the affidavit of financial status. The affidavit of financial status shall be signed under penalty of perjury and shall contain sufficient information to allow the determination to be made of whether the person is entitled to an appointed attorney under this section. If the person is granted an appointed attorney, the affidavit of financial status shall be filed and permanently retained in the person's court file.

3. If a person is granted an appointed attorney, the person shall be required to reimburse the state for the total cost of legal assistance provided to the person. "*Legal assistance*" as used in this section shall include not only an appointed attorney, but also transcripts, witness fees, expenses, and any other goods or services required by law to be provided to an indigent person entitled to an appointed attorney.

4. If the case is a criminal case, all costs and fees incurred for legal assistance shall become due and payable to the clerk of the district court by the person receiving the legal assistance not later than the date of sentencing, or if the person is acquitted or the charges are dismissed, within thirty days of the acquittal or dismissal.

5. If the case is other than a criminal case, all costs and fees incurred for legal assistance shall become due and payable to the clerk of the district court by the person receiving the legal assistance not later than ten days from the date of any court ruling or trial held in the case, or if the case is dismissed, within ten days of the dismissal.

6. An appointed attorney shall submit a report pertaining to the costs and fees for legal assistance to the court at the times specified in subsections 4 and 5. If the appointed attorney

is a public defender, the report shall specify the total hours of service plus other expenses. If the appointed attorney is a private attorney, the total amount of legal assistance shall be the total amount of the fees claimed by the appointed attorney together with other expenses.

7. If all costs and fees incurred for legal assistance are not paid at the times specified in subsections 4 and 5, the court shall order payment of the costs and fees in reasonable installments.

8. If a person is granted an appointed attorney or has received legal assistance in accordance with this section and the person is employed, the person shall execute an assignment of wages. An order for assignment of income, in a reasonable amount to be determined by the court, shall be entered by the court. The state public defender shall prescribe forms for use in wage assignments and court orders entered under this subsection.

9. If any costs and fees are not paid at the times specified under subsections 4 and 5, a judgment shall be entered against the person for any unpaid amounts.

83 Acts, ch 186, §10137, 10201; 93 Acts, ch 175, §23, 24; 96 Acts, ch 1193, §9 – 11; 99 Acts, ch 135, §27; 2000 Acts, ch 1115, §6; 2002 Acts, ch 1067, §15; 2004 Acts, ch 1084, §13